

## **Andrea Mason citation**

*Faculty of Arts*

*Tuesday 12 September 2017, 11.00am*

Chancellor, I am very pleased and proud to present to you Andrea Jane Mason.

The Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University is being awarded to Andrea Mason for her outstanding contribution to Aboriginal, Australian and international communities through her commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social justice; evidenced particularly in her work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

Ms Mason is the Chief Executive Officer of the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council. She is a Ngaanyatjarra woman on her father's side and Kronie on her mother's side.

As CEO of the NPY Women's Council she works across a 350,000 square kilometres of central Australia, supporting Aboriginal women and their communities in creating employment, supporting health and wellbeing, and tackling domestic violence and other social challenges.

She brings together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal thinking, bringing respect and knowledge of local language, law and culture to bear on social change. She has established innovative social enterprises such as the Tjanpi Desert Weavers and other micro-businesses, teaching valued employment skills.

Andrea Mason grew up in Western Australia before her family moved to Adelaide, where she completed her secondary education. She spent two years in Canberra at the Australian Institute of Sport on a netball scholarship.

In 1988, she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Aboriginal Affairs and Public Administration from the then South Australian Institute of Technology. She later returned to study and completed her Bachelor of Laws in 2002, here at the University of Adelaide. During her time at University, she was instrumental in establishing the Aboriginal Law Student Liaison Group, which ultimately resulted in the Law Society of South Australia's Aboriginal Law Student Mentorship Program. This now operates in all three South Australian Law Schools.

Her roles after law graduation included working as Coach in the Federal Government's Indigenous Women's Leadership Program; as Policy Officer in the Community Engagement Branch of the then Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; and as Relationship Manager for Reconciliation Australia. She joined the NPY Women's Council in 2008, initially as a Senior Adviser and Project Manager, becoming Chief Executive Officer – her current role – in 2010. There she has had a profound impact on Aboriginal justice.

Andrea Mason was named Telstra Australian Business Woman of the Year last year for her work in employment creation, workforce planning, tenancy management and reconciliation action plans. This year she was chosen as the Northern Territory Australian of the Year and also appointed Co-Chairperson of the Prime Minister of Australia's Indigenous Advisory Council.

Andrea Mason's commitment, compassion and drive to support families in the vast NPY region is tireless, and deserves our greatest respect and admiration.

Chancellor, it is with great pleasure that I present to you, for conferral of the Degree of Doctor of the University (honoris causa), Ms Andrea Mason, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws.